



Autism West Midlands

Shropshire Family Service Update December 2023



Wow where did this year go?! It has been a fantastic year for the Shropshire team and we are really proud of all the extra support and activities we have been able to offer families this year. We have lots of exciting new things going on in the new year too, including several new 'coffee and chats' popping up over the county. There are also several new webinars on the calendar, and we will continue to offer face-to-face training in as many places as we can.

Keep an eye on the Autism West Midlands Facebook page to be first to hear about our events. Another useful page is 'Shropshire Local Offer' where you will also find a wealth of information for SEN families.

We wish you all a Happy Christmas, but we know that it can also be a challenging time for neurodiverse families so take care and do what feels right for your family. Here are some tips from The National Autistic Society: <https://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/topics/leisure/christmas/tips>.



We continue to provide online **advice appointments** and have listed more dates for December and January dates will also soon be listed. No diagnosis is needed to access this service to Shropshire residents. Next year we are planning to have face-to-face bookable appointments available, currently these can be arranged by contacting the team directly.



Please note that there will not be any advice appointments between 21st December and 4th January.

Helplines open over Christmas:

AWM Helpline 0121 450 7575 - open 27th-29th Dec (closed bank holidays)

Several useful helplines can be found on this link <https://www.kooth.com/urgent-support>

Early Help Drop Ins - Sunflower House, Shrewsbury –We will be attending the drop-in sessions once a month. The next three dates are: 19th December 16th January and 20th February. The drop-in sessions run from 9.30am -12.30pm.

Here is an overview of our upcoming events:

Teen Events – Actio All In (ages 11-17 years)

12th Feb – Teen get-together Youth Club and Cinema– further details to follow.

28th March – Carding Mill Valley

4th April – Attingham (to be confirmed)

Family Event

21st December – Attingham Festive Walk/Mansion visit

Face to Face Parent Meetings

22nd January – Autism and Behaviour and Coffee and chat, St Andrew's Church Shifnal

22nd February – Autism and Behaviour – Cleobury Mortimer Primary School

Book any of the above sessions at the below link:

<https://www.autismwestmidlands.org.uk/events/>



Online Training

16th January – Understanding Autism Webinar

16th February – How Autistic People Process Information

12th March - Autism and Anxiety

Book an online advice appointment with an Autism Specialist Advisor here...

- **WEEKLY Teams Advice slots**

For those who would like some online advice we are offering this virtually via video appointments. Teams also works well on mobile phones. To book a 45 min advice appointment with a specialist autism advisor please book via our shop. If the dates/timings of our online advice appointments are not convenient for you, please contact us to make alternative arrangements – scroll down for details.

<https://shop.autismwestmidlands.org.uk/collections/events/products/copy-of-online-autism-advice-and-consultation-sessions-shropshire-county>

IMPORTANT – WE EMAIL YOUR TEAMS LINK TO YOU THE WEEK BEFORE YOUR SLOT, MAKE SURE YOU CHECK YOUR INBOX INCLUDING SPAM/JUNK TO GET YOUR LINK

- **Virtual Support Group for Parents - Wednesday Mornings 10am - 11am & Wednesday Evenings 8pm - 9pm – 1st and 3rd Weds of each month (term time)**

Our online support groups meet twice a month via Teams. This is an opportunity to talk with other parents, share ideas, and offer support. We recommend that you have attended an online advice appointment with a member of the team before joining group sessions (link above).



If you would like to join either of the support groups, please email the team here shropshire@autismwestmidlands.org.uk

- **Advice and support**

We also offer advice and support over the phone and via email. Parents/carers and professionals can contact the team directly to arrange an appointment including face-to-face if preferable.

Shropshire office	- 01952 454156	
Weds, Thu, Fri	- Emma Hegenbarth	07881109480
Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu	- Dawn Lewis	07706309382
Mon, Tue, Thu	- Nicola King	07706337511
Mon, Thu, Fri	- Kerry McLafferty	07900784186
Email	shropshire@autismwestmidlands.org.uk	

Please remember - No formal diagnosis is needed to access the AWM Shropshire service and there is no formal referral route – parents/carers can self-refer by booking an advice appointment or contacting us directly on our Shropshire email address. You can also use our helpline.